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THESIS

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MAETERLINCK AND THE SYMBOLIST MOVEMENT IN DRAMA.

SUBMITTED BY

DOROTHEA ROMUALD JONES
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MAETERLINCK AND THE SYMBOLIST MOVEMENT IN DRAMA.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century a new type of drama was introduced into Europe under the influence of what was commonly recognized as Symbolism. French literature and drama seem to have been permeated especially by this new school of expression, under the influence and guidance of Gerarde de Nerval, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Mallarmé, and Paul Verlaine whose achievements have gone far to popularize the symbolist ideas. France, however, was not alone in this symbolist movement, as there were also adherents in other countries: in Norway, Henrik Ibsen; in Germany, Gerhart Hauptmann; in Belgium, Maurice Maeterlinck, Rodenbach, Morice Lemonier, Eckoud; in Holland, J. K. Huysman; in Greece, Jean Moréa; in Italy, D'Annunzio; in America, Stewart Merill; in Switzerland, Charles Vignier and Mothias Morhard.

Symbolism was, therefore, not a localized movement, but an international school of literary and dramatic reform. However, it is not strange that Symbolism has made its way into these various countries, if we think, with Arthur Symons, that without symbolism we can have not only no literature, but not even language, for, as he says, "What are words themselves but symbols....?" (1)

1. Arthur Symons, "The Symbolist Movement in Literature". Page 3.

Symbolism in its very essence may seem obscure, abstract, yet, upon a systematized analysis, one will gradually appreciate its significance. Let us first of all review those influences that gave rise to its origin and development and then define Symbolism in its entirety.

Before one can understand what Symbolism really is, one must first remember that it is a reaction against the naturalistic literature of yesterday. Now one asks "What is naturalism?" To explain, by Naturalism is meant the introduction of science into literature, but especially the introduction of scientific proceedings into literature. Thus, everything is regarded from the relative point of view of cause and effect. In other words, there must be physical and physiological causes for everything that happens. Zola, who was the greatest naturalist of the age, and his followers made "scientific examination and treatment the object of literature." Bourget and the school of psychological writers have proceeded with "mathematical accuracy in the world of thought" whenever they were unable to reach the physiological or the physical causes. These writers, Zola, Flaubert, and others, tried to say precisely what they meant, rather than to suggest, so that no doubt was ever left in the reader's mind as to what the author meant.

The reaction of the Symbolists is summed up in their reply to the Naturalists. "Your documents, details, verified facts are

precisely the least worth considering. They are appearances, impalpable shadows of clouds. Nothing ye think to see is what it seems. Nothing outside of our representation exists. All visibilities are symbols. Our business it is to find out what these symbols are. Any book that does not directly concern itself with the hints concealed beneath the diversified masks and aspects of matter is a house built out of a boy's toy-blocks. Science, after promising more things that it could fulfill has many hypotheses just now that float about one central idea-the existence of one essence, infinite in moods, by reference to which, alone, anything whatsoever can be understood. Those of our creed, wholly and solely, have a philosophic basis for their art." (1)

The Symbolists reacted, I say, against all this, and from this reaction evolved most of the characteristics of their writings. The first thing that they set out to do was to discard the element of "mathematical precision" in description which element was a characteristic of Naturalism. How could this be done? It might be accomplished by separating as much as possible the subject of the drama from all the "concrete conditions of existence." The time must not be defined: there are dramas of Maeterlinck that might as well have taken place years ago. Gerard Harry says, "There is hardly one of his works bears the impress of its epoch or of any epoch. Almost

1. French Symbolism. Scrib. 13:337

all might have been conceived and written a thousand years ago, and might equally, no doubt, be produced in any one of the thousands of years to come." (1) Since there is no fixed setting, the descriptions are vague and cannot be located geographically.

The Symbolists try to impress the reader with a feeling of non-realism. They are extremely fond of using old castles in ruins, black forests, crypts, large, endless halls as a setting for their dramas, all of which tend to convey the reader into a dream world.

The next move that the Symbolists made was to shake off the binding law of cause and effect which the Naturalists adhered to so faithfully. They purposely omitted a number of causes whenever they gave an account of some unusual happening. They wished to point out the value of mysterious influences, seemingly insignificant, which really "determine the trend of events" and there is no doubt but what some have succeeded in making us imagine accult actions everywhere.

It would be correct to define Symbolism at this juncture as a means by which a "concrete image" may be used "to create an abstract idea or to evoke a mood." Therefore, according to this definition there are two kinds of Symbolism. First of all, there is the type of Symbolism which uses a "concrete image to convey an abstract idea" and this type is commonly known as

1. Gerard Harry,"Maurice Maeterlinck". Page 21.

intellectual symbolism. "The Symbolistic drama is one that uses signs, animate and inanimate representations to express apart from what the personages say and do, certain ideas relating to the play. Ibsen uses symbols as explanations, commentaries, and elements of beauty." [1] Henrik Ibsen's "The Wild Duck" is the best play that can be offered as an example of intellectual Symbolism, as the interpretation of the Symbolism in this play is dependant upon the intellect of the reader or the audience. Now, "wild ducks, when they are wounded, always dive down to the bottom as deep as they can get and", Ekdal says, "bite fast hold of the weed and wrack and all the rubbish that is down there." So it is that they never come up again.

Who is the "wild duck" in the play? In 1890 the "wild duck" was thought of as "a most remarkable bird, a mystery, a dark symbol that flashed fitfully." [1] It is not at all clear which of the characters the "wild duck" is meant to symbolize. The difficulty that besets the reader in solving this problem is that almost every character in the play might be said to be the wild duck. One critic has said of the characters, "Failures all of them, shot through the wing, like Hedwig's wild duck, they go lamely limping through life happy in their little back-water until the blundering Gregers stirs them up." [1] However, this play contains sympathetic human aspects as well as irony, mysticism, symbolism, and implied philosophy. Thus an audience

1. "The Wild Duck". Bellman24:604

witnessing "The Wild Duck" must have memory, imagination, insight, sympathy, and the faculties of reason-and certainly all of these together are possessed by only a small minority of theatregoers. Hence, we see that Ibsen appeals to the intellect of his audience and well may his symbolism be called intellectual.

The second type of Symbolism is that which "evokes a mood" and this is known as emotional symbolism. Maurice Maeterlinck is by far the most interesting and sympathetic of the group of French Symbolists who make use of this kind of Symbolism.

Maeterlinck set out to make his audiences feel rather than think, and thus it is that he appeals to them emotionally. In place of perceptions and pictures he substitutes sensations and ideas. His work is full of subtle analysis of moods and emotions, and he cultivates a spirit of pessimism, morbidity, and moroseness. His manner of working is clearly brought out in "Pélléas and Mélisande." Here in this play, he accomplishes what he set out to do. The characters remain realistic and natural while the atmosphere surrounding them seems to be filled with something weird and uncanny. The opening and shutting of a gate, the rushing of waves upon the seashore, a hundred of perfectly familiar happenings take on a new significance in the play. The type of Symbolism used in this play is well described by Emerson in his essay on the "Over Soul." The action of the soul is oftener in that which

is felt and left unsaid than that which is said in any conversation."

Maeterlinck portrays the characters as puppets "swayed hither and thither by the mysterious influences of a Destiny which they cannot understand, but only obey."[1] We become very much interested in and pity the unconscious creatures who are oppressed by their own feebleness and who are compelled to refer the solution of their problem to the supernatural and mysterious.

Throughout the whole play there is an atmosphere of the deepest symbolism and in every scene there is a hidden meaning which is suggestive of the force of destiny. In no other play does Maeterlinck give us a better example of his emotional symbolism. Henderson says that the mood in "Pelleas and Melisande" is "ever individualistic, symtomatic of the modern thinker. The action, simple to the point of bareness is but a frail framework through and beyond which we gaze into the depths of the human soul." [2]

One thing that the reader cannot help but notice in the plays of the Symbolists is the general air of sadness which permeates the plays. What is the reason for this? The heroes are really active because "to the Symbolists passivity is the natural attitude." One critic remarked that when man is active he is joyous, but when he is passive he feels no joy.

1. William Courtney, "The Development of Maurice Maeterlinck". Page 48
2. Archibald Henderson, "European Dramatists". Page 206

Thus one might say that where there is action there is joy, and where there is lack of action there is sadness.

Symbolism has hence, for one of its basic precepts, the idea of replacing the expression of things by the suggestion of them. In other words, the aim of the Symbolist is to define as little as possible, thereby causing the reader to create impressions for himself. One time when Mallarmé, a French Symbolist, was asked "In what does Symbolism consist?" he replied, "Vulgarly speaking, in saying just the opposite of what you wish to say." [1]

When Zola, the great Naturalist, was questioned as to the drift of contemporary literature he saw the end of the Naturalistic school when he said "Symbolism may be the literature of the future." Even he recognized the fact that Naturalism was doomed to die.

1. French Symbolism. Scrib. 13:337

VILLIERS DE L'ISLE-ADAM.

Villiers de L'Isle-Adam was one of the primary instigators in the Symbolist movement. He was born in Brittany, November 28, 1838. Villiers, as he is generally called, was a poet, dramatist, and mystic. He regarded the spiritual world as a reality and life as a dream. He was extremely proud of his noble lineage, since he was a descendant of the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Besides this birthright of lineage, he also inherited Catholicism. He was thus able to fight materialism in behalf of his religion and we later find him dedicating a book to the Pope, choosing "ecclesiastical splendors" in preference to the numerous "splendors of the world." It is not a surprise, then, to learn that he used the Church as his favorite symbol of "austere intellectual beauty." It was in connection with religion that he became interested in the mysteries of the spiritual world.

He has been termed by Huneker as "A mystic among mystics." [1] Verlaine wrote of him, "Iam far from sure that the philosophy of Villiers will not one day become the formula of our century." [2] Villiers himself wrote, "Know, once and for all, that there is for thee no other universe than that conception

1. James G. Huneker, "Iconoclasts". Page 355.
2. Arthur Symons, "The Symbolist Movement in Literature". Page 45, cf. footnote.

thereof which is reflected at the bottom of thy thoughts," [1] and this seems to be the keynote of his doctrine.

Symons says that his doctrine is expressed in his drama "Axel" in the lines, "Science states but does not explain: she is the oldest offspring of the chimeras; all the chimeras, then, on the same terms as the world (the oldest of them!) is something more than nothing!" [2]

In "Elen", considered by Huneker as his greatest drama, there is a passage which is equally significant.

"Goetze: There's my philosopher in full flight to the regions of the sublime! Happily we have Science which is a torch, dear mystic; we will analyze your sun, if the planet does not burst into pieces sooner than it has any right to!

Samuel: Science will not suffice. Sooner or later you will end by coming to your knees.

Goetze: Before what?

Samuel: Before the darkness!" [3]

From these two passages we can see how Villiers revolted against science; that is, the materialistic science. We are not surprised to learn, therefore, that Villiers adopted symbolism as a mode of expression. As did all the other symbolists, Villiers reacted fiercely against naturalism. To him the ideal was the real.

Villiers wrote in a solemn, eloquent style, making no at-

1. Arthur Symons, "The Symbolist Movement in Literature". Page45.
2. Ibid:46
3. James Huneker, "Iconoclasts".Page355.

tempt to use the everyday language. He used an ideal language in which he tried to obtain a beauty of verse. He wished to invent only exceptional characters and of course, he had to give them a speech that was more eloquent and pompous than they would otherwise use. He placed his characters in an entirely different world, a world about which we might think or dream.

Everything he wrote had an element of "strangeness" about it, due to the fact that he never dealt with natural or familiar things-with him everything had to be out of the ordinary. It is no wonder that some people thought of him as being "a half mad mystic."

Sometimes the atmosphere of his plays is so morbid that it is oppressive; sometimes it is gay and permeated with laughter; sometimes it is filled with irony.

There seem to be two divisions of Villiers' work. First of all there is the group of dramas, such as "Axel", "Elen," "Morgane", "Isis" and "La Revolte" which deals with the ideal in the world. Then there is the group which is full of irony and "mockery of reality" such as "L'Eve Future", "The Contes Cruels", and "Tribulat Bonhomet."

Villers always presented his characters at the moment of a great crisis; just at the moment when they had to make a decision, undecided in the midst of great temptation. As in the case of the play "The Escape", Pagnol was undecided whether to

kill Marianne and Lucien and thereby make his escape, or to remain and give himself up into the hands of the law.

Villiers was deeply influenced by Beaudelaire and it was due to this influence that he developed a taste for deliberate exaggeration and mystification. His cousin, M. Pontivace de Heussey says, "His genius naturally clear and luminous, became wrapped in a cloudy, fantastical imagery and in obscure and superfine affectations which often spoil his wo work and perplex the reader." [1.]

"The Revolt" and "The Escape" are two of Villiers' best and most suggestive work. Although they are short and simple in form, nevertheless they deal with two of the greatest problems of modern drama. "The Escape" contains a powerful and dramatic crisis and is full of suggestive incidents. When Pagnal realizes that he is caught and will be punished with death, he says, "It's queer!-but-it seems to me as if it were now that I was escaping." [2.]

"The Revolt" which appeared in 1870 is essentially a modern drama. At the time of its appearance in France it was immediately withdrawn by order of the censor, because it dealt with the question of the relation of husband and wife. Ibsen's "The Doll's House" bears a marked resemblance to this play. The same problem is dealt with, the two wives give the same theories of self duty and they both leave home, husband,

1. "The Revolt and The Escape".(introduction, vi.)
2. Ibid:61.

and children in order to lead a better life in a dreamland. As Elizabeth says of dreams, and we might just as well take this to be an expression of Villiers' own thoughts, "to dream is to forget the tyranny of inferior minds which are a thousand times more abject than stupidity itself. It is to escape hearing the moans of incurable misery. It is to forget those humiliations we have to bear and to inflict on others, called social life. It is to forget so-called duties, which are nothing but greed of profit, and in whose name we shut our eyes to the lot of the weak and suffering. It is to contemplate in the depths of our thought a hidden world only faintly reflected by outside realities. It is to strengthen the ever conscious hope in death-death which is at hand. It is to feel the mystery of the everlasting, to feel solitary but immortal. It is to love the Ideal, to love it naturally as the river flows to the sea...To dream is to die, to die in silence with a glimpse in one's eyes." [1]

However, this is where the resemblance ends, for unlike Nora, Elizabeth does not stay away, but returns after a few hours. She discovers that she is no longer self-dependant and she is no longer able to appreciate her own inner life. In other words, her character has become tainted by contact with her husband's materialism. Here Felix is probably a symbol of the real and material things of the world, while

1."The Revolt and The Escape" Page21.

Elizabeth symbolizes the ideal and spiritual world. The play is without a doubt, highly symbolical throughout and it certainly confirms the idea that Villiers is an idealist and a dreamer.

Thus we see that Villiers exerted a marked influence upon Henrik Ibsen especially in his social dramas.

In its more recent representation "The Revolt" has been more successful than in its premier appearance. This shows that understanding of the public has progressed during the last generation. It is a fact that although Villiers preceded Ibsen, Ibsen has been the one to educate the public taste so that it is now able to appreciate Villiers' work.

Like a great many poets and dramatists, Villiers was a poor man, but, nevertheless, he had, as his friends, the greatest intellectual minds of modern France. They recognized the genius of the man while the general public regarded him as a kind of madman. In 1886, however, the tide was turned, and he was no longer an unknown writer when his "L'Eve Future" was published. Thomas Edison, when he read the work said, "That man is greater than I. I can only invent. He creates." [1]

During his lifetime he prepared a "spiritual atmosphere" for the generation to come. Although existing in a material atmosphere he, dauntless to the last, proclaimed his belief

1. James Huneker, "Iconoclasts." Page 365.

in the ideal and spiritual world. Thus he had been inventing a different type of art, Symbolist drama. His characters like those of Maeterlinck live in a different world from ours. Sometimes they live in ancient castles which are lost in the depths of forests; sometimes they are the last descendants of race which is soon to become extinct. In this respect he influenced Maurice Maeterlinck whom we later find saying of him, "All I have done I owe to Villiers, to his conversation more than to his work, though I admire the latter exceedingly."[1].

The attitude of Villiers towards the material world may be summed up in the words, "The world has only the meaning the strength of words and the power of eyes give it, and I consider to look around from a higher point than reality-is the art of life-the secret of human nobleness, of Happiness and Peace." [2].

1. Jethro Bithnell,"The Life and Writings of Maurice Maeterlinck". Page 6.
2."The Revolt and The Escape". Page21.

HENRIK IBSEN

Henrik Ibsen, whom Emile Faguet has termed "the greatest psychological dramatist since the time of Racine," was born on March 20, 1828 at Skien, on the south coast of Norway. Owing to his father's reckless and extravagant habits, the family was reduced to poverty and as a result of this misfortune, Ibsen's schooling was very much limited. Henrick had always wanted to be an artist, but, of course, after the reversal of the family fortune, he could hope for no help from his father or even from his family.

In 1843 at the age of fifteen, he became apprenticed to an apothecary at Grimstad, which was a very dreary town, situated in a dark bay surrounded by hills. Here Ibsen remained for six years during which period he was a diligent student of literature and art. He set out on his literary career with the writing of poetry and dramas and it was at this time that he wrote his blank verse tragedy "Catilina."

In 1850 he left Grimstad for Christiania with the purpose of studying medicine. Here he first became acquainted with Björnson, with whom he was to have so many controversies later in life. As he was not interested enough in the medical profession and as he did not have much money, he gave up the idea of medicine.

Now, he became the "theatre poet" for the theatre at

Bergen. This experience was an education for Ibsen, because up to this time he had read very little, and his acquaintance with the drama was extremely limited. He was able to extend his knowledge because he superintended the staging of one hundred and forty five plays . A small salary and a travelling allowance was given to him which enabled him to travel and meet important men of the theatre such as Heiberg, Hertz and Hans Christian Andersen. He also visited Copenhagen and Dresden where he studied the dramatic art.

In 1857 he was invited to become director of the Norwegian Theatre at Christiania. Unfortunately, this theatre was not successful financially and in 1862 the concern became bankrupt. Ibsen was again poverty stricken. At his wits' end and in desperation he applied for a poets' pension in order to continue his literary work. This plea failed, due, some think, to the influence of his enemies who were aroused by his satires on the government and by his independence of thought. However, the Council of Christiania University granted him a small travelling stipend and his friends who appreciated his genius gave him gifts. Thus, he was enabled to proceed with his studies and to visit various cities of Europe. He finally settled in Rome where he wrote his work "Brand" which brought him immediate international fame as a creative writer. Now his country recognized him and we find the Starthing granting him the

pension which it had formerly refused.

From this time on he was free from the harassing cares of poverty and was able to devote himself wholly and solely to his work. His vocation became the writing of plays and the outstanding feature in the career of Henrik Ibsen was his sincere devotion to what he conceived to be his life mission.

Just as soon as Ibsen became famous, those who had shunned him when he was poverty stricken, now literally grovelled before him. We can see how much he was appreciated by his own countrymen in Norway, when, on the occasion of his seventieth birthday there was great public celebration in Christiania. In the following year a statue of him was erected outside of the Christiania Theatre. When he died in 1906 he was accorded a public funeral.

"Everything which I have created as a poet", Ibsen said, "has had its origin in a frame of mind and a situation in life; I never wrote because I had, as they say, found a good subject."

His whole life was a development. "In every new poem or play", he writes, "I have aimed at my own personal emancipation and purification, for a man shares the responsibility and the guilt of society to which he belongs." [1] Throughout the course of his development, Ibsen has always tried to perfect his tools, and motives that he used in his earlier dramas he would perfect and continue in his later dramas.

1. Archibald Henderson, "Interpreters of Life and The Modern Spirit". Page210

There has never been a dramatic workman who exercised greater care in the preparation of his plays than Henrik Ibsen. He always made three drafts of his dramas and always spent an enormous amount of time in writing them. He became familiar with the minutest details in the lives of his characters.

Ibsen developed a dramatic technique that was entirely new. He achieved the art of identifying the action with the exposition. In the opening lines of his dramas he unveils the past before the reader's eyes and it is not well for the theatregoer to miss the first ten minutes of an Ibsen drama, for he will probably miss important information without which he cannot fully comprehend the rest of the play. An excellent example of this unfolding of the character's past which reacts upon the immediate plot is "A Doll's House", but even more so is "The Wild Duck" in which the past which broods over the family of Hjalmar Ekdel is clearly brought out in the dialogue.

Bernard Shaw passed the following comment on Ibsen's craftsmanship, "What we might have learned from Ibsen was that our fashionable dramatic material was worn out as far as cultivated modern people are concerned, that what really interests such people on the stage is not what we call action... but stories of lives, discussion of conduct, unveiling of motives, conflict of characters in talk, laying bare of souls-

in short illumination of life...." [1]

One thing that is interesting to note is that in a number of his plays, Ibsen adhered to the three unities of time, action, and place.

Ibsen defined the stage as a room with one side removed, and his aim was to present a true reflection of life itself in his dramas. His ideal of drama was "to produce the impression on the reader that what he was reading was something that had already happened." [2] In order to give this impression he had his characters converse in the ordinary language. He later realized that the aside and monologue were artificial and not true to life and so he dropped them from his plays.

He became very much interested in the problems of the will, the sick will and then in the social conditions which determined, as he believed, the character of the will. As a result of this attitude he wrote a group of dramas called social dramas in which he tried to cure society of its ills by exposing them to the public gaze through the medium of his plays. Thus he became more or less a "moral policeman."

Macfall says of him, "He could see only half truths. He eagerly seized upon heredity as one of the prime forces of life-yet he learned his lesson with short sighted eyes, since he saw ever the evils that heredity breeds-never the

1.Archibald Henderson, "Interpreters of Life " Page 168
2; Archibald Henderson,"European Dramatists". Page81.

good. That heredity selected and created the master people was beyond his vision. He brooded upon the drama of life as it went by and judged it by the villaim of the play, not by the hero."

Not all people have agreed that there is symbolism in the works of Henrik Ibsen. Georg Brandes, a very great Scandinavian critic maintained most tenaciously that there was not the slightest symbolism in Ibsen's dramas. On the other hand, there have been other critics who have emphatically declared that Ibsen was just reeking with symbolism. Notable among these critics were William Archer and Emile Faguet. Huneker declared that there were symbols and catchwords in every play.

"A symbol", to give the definition of the French Academy, "is a figure or an image serving to designate something by means of painting, sculpture, or speech." Emile Faguet, a member of The Academy said, ..."he (Ibsen) has invented symbols explanatory of the general thought of his work...." As we have seen before, this is the type of symbolism which is called intellectual.

I personally agree with the critics who proclaim that Ibsen's work is full of symbolism. In "Brand" Ibsen surely meant something by the old church replaced by the new church, "which is flooded with light and stands firm on its foundation." He probably meant it to symbolize the fact

that the old faith was replaced by a new faith that is broader in its views and, as a result, is more firm and indestructible than the former.

In "The Master Builder" Solness builds a house of one hundred stories from which he later falls and is killed. Why does Ibsen put this in the play, if not as a symbol? It might be said to represent his ambitions or his "aspirations towards an ideal that cannot be realized." To tell a story and parallel to it to place a symbol which enlarges the representation, and generalizes the image of the story seemed to be the special technique of Ibsen as a symbolist. So we have in this play, a house which evidently represents the general idea of the play, explains it, puts it in a bright light, and impresses it more deeply upon the mind of the reader.

In "Peer Gynt"-which certainly is a dramatic poem of gemius and power, even though it is frequently obscure and not well adapted for stage presentation-the scene among the goblins surely is symbolic. The goblins seem to represent his "childish desires" and his "fantastic and shifting moods."

The sun in"Emperor and Galilean" is undoubtedly a symbol used probably to represent Julian the Apostle "whose destiny he believes is conducted by the joyous sun."[1] If the sun here is not a symbol then it is foreign to the works and has no

1. James G. Huneker, "Iconoclasts" Page7.

place in it.

It is a coincidence that in "Ghosts" Ibsen again uses the sun as a symbol. At the close of the play, Oswald Alving, having asked his mother to give him some poison, sees the sun and cries "The Sun! The Sun! Mother give me the Sun!" Surely the word "Sun" is used a symbol. Ibsen probably used it to symbolize Oswald's deliverance and freedom from suffering.

The sea in "The Lady from the Sea" is, without a doubt, a symbol of liberty. Henderson sees in Ellida "a mermaid who defies domestication, symbolizing and catching up within hereself all the sheen, fluctuation, and mystery of the wild restless sea."[1] Of the mysterious, nameless lover, Ibsen said, "Nobody should know what he is, just as little should anybody know who he is, or what he is really called. This uncertainty is just the chief point in the method chosen by me for the occasion." 2.

Huneker says "Ibsen's symbolism is that of Beaudelaire, 'All nature is a temple filled with living pillars and the pillars have tongues and speak in confused words, and man walks as through a forest of countless symbols.'" 3

The majority of critics consider that Ibsen's use of symbolism represents a weakening in his power as he developed. Henderson remarked upon the loss of power evidenced by Ibsen when he left his social plays. Moses emphatically declared

1. Archibald Henderson, "Interpreters of Life". Page85
2. Ibid.
3. James G. Huneker, "Iconoclasts". Page6.

that when Ibsen tried to bring back poetry which he had earlier put aside, the poet in him had become warped and symbolism became an element of artistic weakness. He also said that Ibsen was decidedly inferior to Maeterlinck when it came to handling the mystical and intangible.

Contrary to the views of Moses and Henderson, Huneker thinks that instead of weakening Ibsen's drama, his symbolism gives a homogeneity to his plays which they would otherwise not have.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

Maurice Polydore Marie Bernard Maeterlinck was born at Ghent on the twenty ninth of August 1862. He grew up among the Flemish tradition and passed his early childhood at Oostacker which is near a canal that connects Ghent with Ternuezen, a small town in Dutch Flanders. It was on this canal that Maeterlinck used to "skate into Holland." Here Maeterlinck gained a fondness for solitude that he has never lost. He was a very dreamy lad and some people of his native town thought that he was gifted with a second sight. It was probably there in his father's garden that he cultivated his love of nature which exerted such an extensive influence over his later writings. The gloomy town of Ghent, which has always impressed poets and painters, was probably what influenced the fatalistic attitude he held in his early works.

Maeterlinck was soon prepared to go to the Jesuit College of Sainte Barbe at Gand. Here he became intimately acquainted with Charles Van Lerberghe and Gregaire Le Roy, who later were also his fellow students at the University of Ghent.

At Sainte Barbe, Maeterlinck was instructed by the Jesuit Fathers who seemed to excercise a narrow tyranny over him. Later he said that he would not voluntarily subject himself to

the seven years of intellectual limitation that he had to undergo at this college.

In 1885 he entered the University of Ghent to study law, because he was the eldest of his family and had to follow the tradition that the eldest son of the family should become an "avocat." Soon he graduated and became a member of the bar in his native town. Nature, however, never intended for him to be an "avocat" because she endowed him with a thin, harsh voice and gave him a soul that could not bear the noise and publicity of the courts but one that had a great desire for solitary meditation.

In 1886 he visited Paris where he became associated with such poets as Mikhael, Jean Ajalbert, Pierre Quillard, Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, and Stephane Mallarme. He remained in Paris for about seven months and then returned to Belgium where he met Georges Rodenbach who was a mystic and a poet of silence. There is no doubt but what he exerted an influence over Maeterlinck.

In 1887 Maeterlinck became associated with a review "La Jeune Belgique" which was founded by students of Brussells University. For three successive years this review published one poem of Maeterlinck's each year. These three poems were later included in his first book of verse, "Serres Chaudes." The subject of this collection of verse was the soul.

Maeterlinck saw the soul "languid and moist, oppressed and helplessly inactive in a hot house whose doors are closed forever."

This book met with the utmost disapproval of the people of Ghent. He was branded as a decadent and that was a terrible thing in Belgium at that time, for even to be a poet was a disgrace. For instance, Charles Van Lerberghe and Gregaire Le Roy had been received with sheer contempt, culminating even in cruel insults. Gregaire Le Roy, author of Mon Coeur Pleure d'Autrefair, lost all courage and turned electrical engineer. Thus, Maeterlinck received no encouragement from his native people.

Nevertheless, the tide turned, and with the publication of "The Princess Maleine" he became famous immediately. Even Ivan Gilkan, a Belgian critic who was very much opposed to the new movement that was springing up in drama recognized the genius of Maeterlinck when he characterized the play as "an important work that marks an epoch in the history of the stage."[1] But it was the famous article of Octave Mirbeau which made Maeterlinck when he hailed Maeterlinck as a second Shakespeare.

Maeterlinck did not care for the publicity that the success of his work entailed and, on the other hand, he was bewildered by it. Nevertheless, the praise of his play accomplished something, because it gave him a certain consciousness

1. Gerard Harry, "Maurice Maeterlinck". Page 13.

of his own powers and a confidence which he had hitherto lacked.

About this time he studied English and he progressed so well that he was able to read the work of Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster, and Heywood in the original. He said, "I have assiduously familiarized myself with the English poets, notably Shelly and Browning. I owe much to the German classics." He even took the trouble to translate the fourteenth century Flemish of Ruysbroeck and later he wrote a book entitled "Ruysbroeck and the Mystics."

As soon as his reputation was made and he was renowned-as in Ibsen's case-his country acclaimed him.

Gerard Harry says of him, "He is no dogmatizer, no man of systems....he moves forward amid the countless uncertainties and contradictions of things issuing no authoritative decisions, merely giving for what they are worth his marvellous interpretations which vary with the changing and Sybilline answers of the oracle consulted." [1]

The successive stages of Maurice Maeterlinck's mental development are intimately connected with his changing conception of destiny. In the first stage of his development he regarded Fate as "some monstrous, external, irrestible force which compels and enslaves human beings from the outside."[2]

1Gerard Harry, "Maurice Maeterlinck". Page 41.
2. William Courtney, "The Development of Maurice Maeterlinck". Page19.

This is the period of his early plays such as "La Princesse Maleine", "Pélléas and Mélisande", and"Alladine and Palomides." In these plays he has human beings represented as puppets which are "swayed hither and thither by the mysterious influences of a Destiny which they cannot understand, but only obey." [1] Life, in these plays, does not seem external, nor is it expressed in definite actions, but it appears as something very remote and mysterious.

"Three Little Dramas for Marionettes" is the title that Maeterlinck gave to his three little plays, "Alladine and Palomides", "Interior", and "The Death ofTintagiles", which in turn have been called "dramas of unconsciousness and instinct." The plays have the settings of subterranean chambers, winding staircases, secret passages." "The keynote of these little plays is dread of the unknown that surrounds us." [2]

In "The Death of Tintagiles", Maeterlinck portrayed Fate or Destiny as some hideous and irresistible force from which it is impossible to escape. No matter how well the sisters of Tintagiles guarded him, the Queen, symbolical of death, eventually took him when she desired him. We find this to be a prevalent mood in all of his earlier dramas which are full of pessimism and morbidness in that the lives are always in

1. William Courtney, The Development of Maurice Maeterlinck" Page 48.
2.Maurice Maeterlinck,"The Evolution of Mystery" Fortn:73, 902

the grip of fate. The characters have a vague terror of the unknown, and they apprehend that something is going to happen; and although they fear death, they are resigned to Fate because they think that they are powerless to overcome it.

Maeterlinck, in these dramas, tried to create "the spell of the unseen to show by outward repression how tense the inward force of Destiny was."

However, this mood, which prevailed in the earlier works of Maeterlinck and which was permanent in the works of many French Symbolists, was now dropped by Maeterlinck because he had come to realize that Fate is not an external power, but something that is a part of oneself. "Whether you climb up the mountains or go down the hill to the valley, whether you journey to the end of the world or merely walk round your house, none but yourself shall meet you on the highway of Fate." 1.

"Aglavaine and Selysette" marks the transition of Maeterlinck from his dramas of fatality and terror and unreality to the dramas of reality. It is in this play that he leaves the clouds and descends to earth to deal with real people who have real problems to solve. He seems to recognize the value of spiritual forces, devotion, and self sacrifice because he vaguely brings them out in this play.

1. Maurice Maeterlinck, "Wisdom and Destiny". Page 31.

In "The Buried Temple" Maeterlinck gives an account of his change of attitude toward life and that is that will and love can triumph over destiny. As a result of this new attitude toward life he writes "Monna Vanna", an extremely vivid drama. This is an entirely different type of play in which are "men and women of veritable flesh and blood."

In his next play "Joyzelle", Maeterlinck seems to return to the characteristics of his earlier works, as it is hardly a drama being mystical and dreamlike. However, in this work, he progresses on the road of Philosophical thought because here he gives victory to love rather than to fate.

Thus one can see that Maeterlinck has developed his view of life from the pessimistic idea that fate "ordained every detail in the lives of an animal and of the human races" to the hopeful view that will and love can triumph over fate. Maeterlinck has been original and distinctive in all his experiments, and he is the most impressionable of modern dramatists, delving deeply at times to the very core of modern problems thereby "challenging comparison as moralist even with Ibsen."

Side by side with Maeterlinck's mental development has grown his dramatic development. After he wrote his first volume of verses, "Serres Chaudes", a few poems, and a volume of ballads and songs, he then drifted into the field of

drama. In La Jeune Belgique he said "Art is a temporary mask under which the unknown without a fact puzzles us. It is the substance of eternity, introduced within us by a distillation of infinity....King Lear, Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet should not be performed..... Every masterpiece is a symbol and a symbol cannot bear the active presence of man. There is a continual discord between the forces of a symbol and the forces of man,-the symbol of a poem is the center, the rays of which stretch out into infinity....The Greeks felt that antimony and their masks which seem incomprehensible to man and to facilitate the symbol....

The poem begins to retreat into the shadow as the man comes forth." [1].

The essence of this passage gives us the basic principles of Maeterlinck's early dramatic theories. This work points out definitely the tendencies of his symbolical drama and at the same time explains things which we might otherwise regard as peculiar.

In "La Princesse Maleine" his first dramatic work, he showed the influence of Shakespeare, but nevertheless his work is markedly original. However, it is not surprising that Octave Mirbeau thought the play was in Shakespearian style for there are some striking resemblances between the

characters of Maeterlinck and those of Shakespeare. For instance, Hjalmar is decidedly a copy of Hamlet and the nurse is clearly modelled on the nurse in "Romeo and Juliet." Then, again there are the same dire portents such as a comet shedding blood over the castle, a rain of stars, an eclipse of the moon together with many other signs which herald a coming disaster. But here the resemblance ends.

"In the theatre" says Maeterlinck, "I wish to study exclusively man....to look at his attitude in presence of eternity and mystery, to attempt to unveil the eternal characteristic hidden under the accidental characteristics of the lover, father, husband, and so forth."[1] Thus, Maeterlinck's man is only a symbol of his "infinite transcendental side", while Shakespeare's man holds no mystery for us and therefore is penetrable.

In the dramas of Maeterlinck nature coöperates with man by either warning him of some catastrophe about to come or by mourning after it has come. Shakespeare introduces the supernatural only when it helps the action and his witches, ghosts, and so forth ought to be considered as the "inward psychological disposition of the hero."

Shakespeare makes great use of the dialogue in which he interprets the inner thoughts of his characters. This is why we find his characters philosophising about their states of

1. Montrose Moses,"Maurice Maeterlinck, A Study". Page

mind which later on in the plot becomes responsible for their deeds. Maeterlinck's characters, on the other hand, never philosophise and we never know what is going on in their minds because Maeterlinck looks upon man as a "great fathomless mystery....at which one can only glance." He has his characters speak in short sentences, often left unfinished, thus leaving much for the reader to guess. The language that he uses is the common speech of the Flemish peasants. The characters "grope for words, but we know by what they do not say what is happening in their souls."

Maeterlinck's intention differs from that of Shakespeare because he suggests the helplessness of human beings in trying to combat with Fate, while Shakespeare moves his audience by showing human beings acting under the force of certain passions. Maeterlinck told Huret that his intention was "to write a play in Shakespeare's manner for a marionette theatre."[1]

The next plays that he wrote were "The Intruder", "The Blind" (1890); then, "The Seven Princesses", (1891); "Pélléas and Mélisande", (1892); Alladine and Palomides, The Interior, and "The Death of Tintagiles", 1894; all of which are classified under the name of "marionette dramas." In his preface to the marionette plays, Maeterlinck declares that he detests the

1. Jethro Bithnell, "The Life and Writings of Maurice Maeterlinck" Page 37.

actor who reproduced the ordinary life of the character he portrays, rather than the superior life the poet had in mind.

All of these marionette plays are of a type of drama known as static drama. Maeterlinck reaches his fullest expression of the static drama when he says "I have grown to believe that an old man seated in his armchair, waiting patiently with his lamp beside him, giving unconscious ear to all the eternal laws that reign about his house, interpreting without comprehending, the silence of doors and windows, and the quivering voice of the light, submitting with bent head to the presence of his soul and his destiny-an old man who conceives not that all the powers of this world like so many heedful servants, are mingling and keeping vigil in his room, who suspects not that the very sun itself is supporting in space the little table against which he leans, or that every star in heaven and every fibre of the soul are directly concerned in the movement of an eyelid that closes, or a thought that springs to birth-I have grown to believe that he motionless as he is, does yet live in reality a deeper, more human and more universal life than the lover who strangles his mistress, the captain who conquers in battle, or the husband who avenges his honor." [1]

Thus Maeterlinck believed explicitly in the static drama as the best type, and he showed that Aeschylus had made use of the

1. Thoughts from Maeterlinck. Page 247.

static drama in his tragedies. The most notable characteristic, therefore, of his marionette dramas is the lack of action.

This static drama proved to be only a passing phase in his dramatic development and before we are aware of the fact he has changed his conception when he says, "Dramas which deal with unconscious creatures whom their own feebleness oppresses and their own desires overcome, excite our interest and arouse our pity, but the veritable drama, the one which probes to the heart of things and grapples with important truths-our own personal drama, in a word which forever hangs over our life-is the one wherein the strong, intelligent, and conscious commit errors, faults, and crimes which are almost inevitable; wherein the wise and upright struggle with all-powerful calamity with forces destructive to wisdom and virtue. " [1].

When he met Georgette Le blanc Maeterlinck became changed and he was soon convinced that action was absolutely necessary for modern drama. Maeterlinck came to realize that psychology and moral problems ought to have first place in the drama. Now, he writes, "To penetrate deeply into human consciousness is the privilege, even the duty of the thinker, the moralist, the historian, novelist, and to a degree, of the lyrical poet; but not of the dramatist. Whatever the temptation, he dare not sink into inactivity, become mere philosopher or observer...the sovereign law of the stage, its essential demand will always be

1. Maurice Maeterlinck,"The Evolution of Mystery" Fortn. 73:910

action."[1] Thus we find that his dramatic views are exactly the opposite of those which he held in regard to the static drama.

Whereas before he said, ..."the only words that count in the play are those that at first seemed useless, for it is therein the essence lies",[2] he refutes these words and now says, "There are no words so profound, so noble and admirable, but they will soon weary us if they leave the situation unchanged, if they lead to no action, bring about no decisive conflict or hasten no definite solution."[3] Hence, we have Maeterlinck's own words for his dramatic evolution.

When he had finally realized that modern drama must have action and some kind of a struggle, he wrote "Monna Vanna" which is a real stage drama, having real actors, vigorous action, and a definite setting in both time and place.

"The theatre of marionettes has, therefore, become a theatre of noble action created by man's struggle against himself and against ignorance. Maeterlinck's development is consistent, but being a philosopher as well as a poet, it is two-fold and almost significant....Maeterlinck's philosophy has advanced from darkness into light, from abstractedness into scientific analysis; his drama has advanced from shadow into flesh and blood. In neither case has he been loathe to change his mind."[4] Thus does Moses admirably sum up Maeterlinck's mental and dramatic

1. Thoughts from Maeterlinck. Page 252
2. The Modern Drama, Cornhill Mag. 80:166
3. Montrose Moses, "Maurice Maeterlinck".
4. Ibid: 123

development.

In Maeterlinck the whole symbolic tendency reached its climax. Maeterlinck has been termed by Henry Rose as "One of the foremost living Symbolists." [1] He added that in "Pélléas and Mélisande", in his one act play, "The Blind," and in many of his other works he had displayed powers of symbolic writing of the highest order.

When he was a young man he read and translated the ancient Flemish manuscripts of Ruysbroeck which first turned his attention towards mysticism, which in turn resulted in his adoption of symbolism as a mode of expression. Maeterlinck said of Ruysbroeck, "Many of his phrases float almost like transparent icicles on the colorless sea of silence; but still they exist....Sometimes we do not immediately discern the outline of the ideas which are still steeped therein....All of his books treat of...the introversion and introspection of the soul, the contemplation of God above all similitudes and kindnesses and the drama of the divine love on the unhabitable peaks of the spirit." [1.2.]

Plotenus, a Pagan Mystic said, "We must first make the organ of vision analogous and similar to the object which it is to contemplate. The eye would never have perceived the sun if it had not first taken the form of the sun; so likewise the soul could never see beauty if it did not become

1. Henry Rose,"Maeterlinck's Symbolism" Page 1.
2. Maurice Maeterlinck,"Ruysbroeck and the Mystics" Page 26.

beautiful itself."[1] After reading what these mystics said, we cannot help but see the influence that they exerted over Maeterlinck.

With the publication of "Serres Chaudes", Maeterlinck became identified with the group of mystics in France who were known as Symbolists. This French school of Symbolists must be distinguished from that of Ibsen or Hauptmann. In his symbolism Maeterlinck tried "by tricks of sound and rhythm, of figure and image, by allusion and suggestion, to cast a langorous spell over the reader, evoking rare and fleeting emotions, producing strange and indefinite impressions."[2] As I have pointed out before, this type is known as emotional symbolism.

If it was not for the symbolism which underlies all of Maeterlinck's writings, they would not be so fascinating. The ordinary lines of conversation in themselves are extremely commonplace, but if one looks deeply enough, he cannot fail to see the hidden meaning beneath it all.

"Pélleas and Melisande" contains an atmosphere of the deepest symbolism. Everything that the characters do or say has some sort of a symbolic meaning. This drama, as I said before, is characteristic of Maeterlinck's method of expression, and he creates such emotion that it sways the reader, disturbs his mind, and leaves him with a feeling of depression

1. Maurice Maeterlinck, "Ruysbroeck and the Mystics" Page 28.
2. Archibald Henderson, "European Dramatists". Page 204

and uneasiness. There certainly is a tragic significance in the balcony scene, the loss of Melisamde's wedding ring, the cavern scene, and numerous other things. Nature, in this play, seems to foresee a coming disaster and suggests the "overshadowing dominance of the divinity that shapes our ends."

The theme of the play with a Francesca di Rimini plot is extremely simple. Goloud, a king's son, discovers Mélisande sitting at the brink of a spring in the woods. She declares that she is lost. Goloud marries her and brings her home to his grandfather Arkel, King of Allemonde. Unfortunately, Pélléas, Golaud's half brother and Mélisande fall in love. Later Goloud discovers them embracing, whereupon he slays Pélléas and wounds Mélisande who later dies.

In "The Intruder", "The Blind", "The Seven Princesses", and "The Death of Tintagiles" Maeterlinck developed the theme of the approach of death. The plot of "The Intruder" is very simple, as indeed are the plots of the other three plays. In a dark room in a chateau sit the Father, the Uncle, and the three daughters. Apart from them sits the old, blind grandfather. His daughter, the Mother, is dangerously ill in an adjoining room. The grandfather has a feeling that the Mother is going to die, while the rest of the group are full

of hope. A door is heard to open, footsteps ascend, and finally there is a knock. It is the maid, but she does not enter the room. The grandfather persistently asks who has entered and just as persistently they all deny that anyone has entered. Just as the grandfather insists that there is a stranger in their midst, the Sister of Charity comes out from the Mother's room and announces that she is dead. Thus, the blind grandfather was the only one to sense the approach of the intruder, Death, and so, one might say "he who sees least sees most." The intruder symbolizes Death coming to a woman. Resistance was impossible because death was invisible.

In "The Blind", Maeterlinck's next play, Death, the intruder comes unperceived into the midst of a group of blind men and women. They wait in vain for the return of the Priest, their guide and leader. Unknown to them he sits not far from them, dead.

In "The Seven Princesses" Death visits one of the seven princesses while they sleep. There is no resistance whatsoever, but in "The Death of Tintagiles" we have a decided contrast, for in this play Death is fought against, but to no avail.

Space will not permit the discussion of all the symbols which the plays contain for they are too numerous to mention. However, there is no doubt but what Maeterlinck has accom-

plished that which he set out to do: to evoke a mood and to produce strange and indefinable impressions. All that Maeterlinck has done in these plays might be summed up in the words spoken by Victor Hugo to Beaudelaire, "You have created a new shudder."

Let us look, however, in detail at the symbolism in Maeterlinck's "Blue Bird" which Henry Rose thinks is far in advance of the others. In this play, he brings out especially the correspondence between the spiritual and the physical, "by virtue of which physical things are recognized as severally endowed with specific spiritual meanings."

Before we discuss the symbolism in the play, let us first of all look at the story. A fairy sends Mytyle, a girl, and Tyltyl, a boy, two children of a woodcutter, in quest of "the blue bird, that is to say, the great secret of things and happiness." On their journey they are accompanied by Light, the Dog, the Cat, Sugar, Bread, Fire, Water, and Milk.

Their first stop is in the Land of Memory where they visit their dead grandparents. At the children's approach they awake from their sleep and here the astonishing revelation is made that the dead awaken whenever people on earth think of them. When the children leave, they present them with a bird which seems to be blue; but after they (the children) have left the Land of Memory, they discover that it has become black.

The next place that they come to on their wanderings is the Palace of Night. Mother Night has been warned of their approach by the Cat and she is tremendously upset. Everything is done to prevent the children from procuring the blue birds which are kept locked behind one of the doors to which Night has the key. In spite of all the opposition, they finally succeed in capturing a number of blue birds but when they escape from the Palace of Night, the blue birds die.

Next in their travels they arrive at the enchanted Palaces where Fate keeps men's joys and happinesses under her surveillance. They question the Luxuries of the Earth, the Happinesses, and the Great Joys, but all to no avail.

Finally, they reach the Kingdom of the Future which is high up in the clouds. Here in the Palace live more than thirty thousand children waiting to be born. While waiting, they think about what crime they will commit, what inventions they will make, what happiness they will give and so forth.

As soon as Father Time discovers the children, he is furious and just as he comes menacingly towards them, Tyltyl turns the magic diamond which always protects them from harm. Just as Light whispers that she has the blue bird, the act ends.

In the next scene we discover the children in bed just as they were when the play opened. Thus it was all a dream; but

such a fanciful one!

Now, of what, may we ask, is the blue bird a symbol? Some critics think that it is a symbol of happiness while others think that it is a symbol of celestial truth, "the truth that is essential to man's highest and spiritual well being." In this play is represented man's search for the highest and noblest things of the spirit. Naturally, if one seeks in the right way, happiness will be the reward for attaining his goal.

Many people look upon this play as a mere fair story, but they have only to look a little beneath the surface to discern the wealth of meaning hidden in the lines.

The children, one might say, are symbolical of humanity that seeks knowledge and thereby happiness.

The diamond, which saves the children at moments of various crises, because of its purity and worth might be said to represent the "spiritual light."

Light probably is symbolical of the light of human understanding which is gained by means of reason, intelligence, and knowledge. Fire, Water, Milk, Sugar, and Bread are symbols of what man's physical life needs as contrasted with the needs of his spiritual life.

When the children arrive home from their journey in quest of the blue bird, they discover that they have grown and this growth is symbolical of their spiritual growth.

In the Kingdom of the Future we see thousands of children waiting to be born. As one critic put it, this symbolizes "the infinity of progress."

In this play, Maeterlinck contrasts the wrong aims with the right ones; the true joys with the false joys. We also find in this play the "gospel of duty...affirmed and still more the gospel of love." Well might we say with Moses that "He translates all character into delicate symbols of spiritual principles." From this play we learn that "Man's salvation lies, not only in the right interpretation of the past, and the right use of the present, but in the will ever to go forward. There is strength to be derived and virtue gained even from seeking." [1]

1. Henry Rose, "Maeterlinck's Symbolism". Page 43

Henrik Ibsen and Maurice Maeterlinck two of the greatest figures in the Symbolist movement in Drama differ decidedly in regard to their dramatic theories, their use of symbolism, as well as their interpretation of life.

It is a coincidence that both men lived in towns that did not appreciate them; both men left their native cities; and once fame came to them, the voices of their native countries were the loudest in acclaiming them.

Both men were pessimistic and morose, but there was a constitutional difference between them in that the moroseness and pessimism of Ibsen was always a part of him, while the moroseness of Maeterlinck was just a passing phase, as one might say.

Maeterlinck was a mystic who saw "through life along the current in which life is flowing", while Ibsen was more or less, a social philosopher, working for the freedom of the individual. And now, this brings us to Ibsen as a realist, who tried to clear society of its ills by producing such dramas as "Ghosts", and "The Pillars of Society." As contrasted with Ibsen the realist, we have Maeterlinck, the idealist, who did not take it upon himself to reprove society for he saw "only the active principle of man at work."

Maeterlinck had all the advantages of a liberal education which is shown in his later works. He has literally devoured the literature of past ages, especially that of the ancient mystics and German classical writers, and he mastered English sufficiently to read the great English poets in the original. Ibsen, on the other hand, had an extremely limited education; he was not a book reader; he had very little interest in science or philosophy, and he spoke only German. He was entirely satisfied with his intellectual powers and made no attempt to increase his knowledge. This is so different from Maeterlinck who has an insatiable desire to increase his knowledge.

Maeterlinck was subject to change in his views of life as we have seen above. He was willing to sacrifice one theory if he thought that another theory was better, and thus it is that we constantly find him changing in both his mental and dramatic attitude. But Ibsen was never subject to change; he might have varied his ideas at times, but rather than altering or changing his conviction, he only deepened it.

The only place where Maeterlinck and Ibsen might be said to coincide is that in the dramas of both, especially in Maeterlinck's earlier dramas, there is an absence of action.

In Ibsen's "A Doll's House" there is a decided lack of action, as the main theme is carried on by means of dialogue. Here the resemblance ends. The symbolism of both differed in that Ibsen used the type of symbolism known as intellectual, while Maeterlinck used the type known as emotional symbolism. As I have defined and explained these types of symbolism and the author's use of it in a previous part of the work, I shall not deal with it here.

Their theory and thoughts differed entirely because Maeterlinck did not take it upon himself to prove the scientific doctrine that all disease was hereditary, while Ibsen did. In his social dramas Maeterlinck saw only an "unhealthiness outside of illumined consciousness" and in the theatre he saw only "a species of morbid madness that is neither healthy nor invigorating."

GERHART HAUPTMANN

The period of German drama between the years 1880 and 1890 might be characterized as one of storm and stress owing to the international movement of symbolism. It was at this time that Gerhart Hauptmann first came into notice.

At first he was a naturalist and a disciple of Zola, but he early outgrew the school of naturalism as he could not bear to be bound by rules. Then the social tendencies of the age demanded a"valuation of personality" and we find him favoring symbolism by means of which he "creates and peoples a new world."

Ibsen exercised a great influence over his early works and later the influence of the foreign writers Verlaine, Beaudelaire, and Maeterlinck played a part. It was not long before Hauptmann wrote "Before Sunrise", a social drama of the type of Ibsen's "Ghosts." Then came his other social dramas; such as, "Lonely Lives", "Before Dawn", and "The Coming of Peace", also under the influence of Ibsen. In "The Coming of Peace" we have presented to us a "domestic catastrophe" where the children suffer because the marriage of their parents was loveless. In "Lonely Lives" the loneliness of the heart and soul is portrayed.

In 1890 Hauptmann dropped the theme of the domestic dramas and he began to deal with themes of larger interest. Now, we find him writing "The Weaver" of which Huneker said "The Weavers' was a quivering transcript from life-and such life!" From this time on Hauptmann was himself, dropping the influence of Ibsen. Instead of dealing with the "individual" to the extreme as Ibsen does, he now deals with the "masses."

Symbolism could not help but appeal to the "deep-rooted religious sentiment of Gerhart." [1] Thus, after his play "The Weavers", he wrote his symbolical dramas: "Hannele", "Elga", "Helias", "The Sunken Bell", "Pippa Dances."

In the play "Hannele", Hauptmann has succeeded in making a dream of delirium appear vivid and natural by means of symbolism.

Hannele Maltern attempts to drown herself because she is cruelly abused by her step-father. Although she is rescued, she becomes extremely ill from the effects of her plunge into the icy waters. She becomes delirious and dreams that certain people come to her, such as her dead mother and her former school master. "Hannele", says Professor Coar,"contrasted spiritual consciousness with moral consciousness."

1. Karl Holl, "Gerhart Hauptmann". Page 55.

Hunneker says of Hauptmann, "In 'Hannele'" and in his other dramatic productions, he has proved himself to possess in a consummate degree the art of arousing certain emotions, of presenting most vividly types which have excited his brain into abnormal activity; above all he knows the art of contrasts. He is an idealist, he is a realist, he is a religionist, he is a natural philosopher." [1.]

In "The Sunken Bell" there is an atmosphere that is altogether dreamlike. He (Hauptmann) paints the picture, leaving the meaning to be drawn by the audience, and uses symbols in place of personifications. The fundamental meanings of the play are puzzling. As in Ibsen's "Peer Gynt", there is a blending of the real and the unreal. Although Heinrich wanders in fairyland, nevertheless he still keeps his "human qualities and relationships." The old witch, Nickelmann, and the dwarfs give a certain atmosphere of unreality and, as I said before, the symbols seem to center around the main characters. If we look at Henrich the bell founder as a symbol, we see in him a representation of the type of struggling artist who suffers defeat, but who still aspires to a new ideal, more remote and loftier in aspect. Then again we might say that Heinrich is symbolical of humanity struggling toward an ideal. The bell

1. James Huneker, "Iconoclasts". Page193.

the soul of the German nation will apprehend what I especially wanted to symbolize by the character of Michel. Yea, what was not hovering around me! I thought of a marriage between the German genius, in the person of Michel, and the ideal of southern beauty as it is embodied in Pippa." [1].

This passage expresses much more adequately than I could ever hope to express the meaning of the symbolism in "Pippa Dances." It also gives a clear conception of the way in which Hauptmann's mind works when he develops his dramas. As one critic said "The majority of Hauptmann's plays record the struggle of mankind to widen its spiritual horizon." His concern seems to be with the ideal alone. Although he often depicts scenes of squalor and misery, yet his interest in anything depends upon the effect it has upon the soul.

In the symbolistic drama that we have been dealing with, we have a new type of allegory; its new element is a spiritual one.-"The questioning of God and the universe." A different and new viewpoint is offered by every dramatist. It is because of these various viewpoints that a flexible form of allegory has been developed entirely lacking in the forms of strict rules. Representative symbols are given in the form of characters which in turn represent types of humanity or of mysterious powers. Another element contained in this modern symbolism is one that allows the reader absolute freedom in

1. Karl Holl, "Gerhart Hauptmann". Page 70.

which Heinrich carries is symbolical of his ideal.

In the play "Pippa Dances", Hauptmann shows more clearly the relation of the real to the ideal. He gives us the key to the hidden meaning underlying the play when he says "In all of us there lives something for which our souls desire; we all seek for something which dances to and fro before our souls in beautiful colors and graceful movements. This something we will call Pippa. She is a young beauty, for whom are seeking all in whom imagination has not been extirpated. The manager of the glassworks who desires her, dreams of Titian, who is supposed to have a likeness to his uncle, the head forester; the old Huhn is a primitive strong nature, a great artist, a brutal fellow with brutal instincts for the enjoyment of beauty, an old corybant-thus I call him purposely-and the young travelling artizan, Michel Hellriegal, he is the symbol for that which lives in the soul of the German nation. He is the youth full of naïveté and humble humor, full of hopes and longing, the youth who yields with humor to his tragic fate, but who does not lose his illusions for he lives on in them. The brutal force in my fairy tale, as so often in my life, vanquishes the tender beauty, and, as if hypnotised, Pippa follows the ardent desire of Huhn and dances and dances until she falls down and is shattered....But Michel lives; he is who is nearest to our

nation. He will continue to seek for the ideal of beauty. And the beauty who, like Pippa, must expose herself and dance before the mob, is slain by the mob as Pippa is by the old Kraftmensch Huhn. And Wann, whom I have designated as a mythical personality, he, the old man who lives alone in the mountains, who, enlightened, looks down on things and men, he, the sage, who knows the depths of the earth and of mankind, he, too, still feels joy at youth and beauty. He takes her up to protect her, but he cannot save her, since brutal force makes Pippa dance to death.

I did not want sophisticated reasoning, nor can others comprehend my fairy poem through it; I wanted to express what I felt, what hovered around me, what my imagination evoked of fairy charm and the longing for beauty, what captivated my soul. The external did not and does not matter to me. I wanted only to liberate myself from what was rooted firmly in my own mind. I wanted to free myself from it and when I wrote the poem, not by cool reflections, but in such a way as to make everything that lives in my heart rise glitteringly by the charm of the ideal of beauty in many colors and in images of light. Now my dream has become a reality and this forms my happiness; perhaps someone may at sometime understand fully my dream and my happiness; perhaps

interpreting the symbol. Thus the reader is encouraged to take his own moral and interpretation from the play,

Already Symbolism is dying out, and a reaction, especially in France, has sprung up against it. As symbolism reacted upon Naturalism, so this new movement known as Naturism is reacting upon Symbolism. The Symbolists did all in their power to get away from nature and what was normal, while these reactionists against Symbolism are trying to come back to a nature that is poetic and healthy, and a literature that is more simple.

SUMMARY OF THESIS

The Symbolist movement which arose during the latter part of the nineteenth century grew up as a direct reaction against the Naturalism of Zola and Flaubert. This movement was not a localized one, but an international movement in that it attracted the leading dramatists of many countries; such as, France, Germany, Norway, Belgium, Holland, Greece, Italy, America, and Switzerland.

"Symbolism is that which uses a concrete image to convey an abstract idea or to evoke a mood." Thus there are two types of symbolism: intellectual symbolism which uses a concrete image to convey an abstract idea, and emotional symbolism which evokes a mood. The aim of the symbolists was to define as little as possible, thereby causing the reader to create impressions for himself.

Four of the great leading figures in this movement were: Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Henrik Ibsen, Maurice Maeterlinck, and Gerhart Hauptmann.

Villers de l'Isle Adam belonged to the first school of symbolism in France. He was one of the early inventers of symbolism as a mode of expression. He was an extreme idealist who, in all his work, reacted fiercely against Naturalism.

Dauntless to the last, he proclaimed his belief in the ideal and spiritual world. He is important not only as one who was a primary instigator of the Symbolist Movement, but also as one who decidedly influenced Henrik Ibsen and Maurice Maeterlinck.

Henrik Ibsen marks a decided advance in the development of the Symbolist movement. He was the greatest exponent of intellectual symbolism, using signs, animate and inanimate representations to express apart from what the personages do and say, certain ideas relating to the play. There is marked symbolism in his plays,"The Wild Duck", "Brand", "The Master Builder", "Emperor and Galilean", "Ghosts", and "The Lady from the Sea."

In Maurice Maeterlinck, the whole symbolic tendency reached its climax. He is the greatest interpreter of emotional symbolism, making his audience feel rather than think, by substituting sensations and ideas in place of perceptions and pictures. He accomplished this extremely well in his dramas; "Pélléas and Mélisande", "The Intruder", "The Blind", "The Seven Princesses", "The Death of Tintagilès", "Alladine and Palomides" and "The Interior."

Gerhart Hauptmann, one of the leading German dramatists, was attracted to the Symbolist movement. Symbolism could not

help but appeal to his deep religious sentiment. He early came under the influence of Henrik Ibsen and later that of Maeterlinck and the French symbolists. His plays "Hannele", Elga", "Helios", "The Sunken Bell", and "Pippa Dances" are full of symbolism.

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